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ORIGIN ARA-15

NFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCS-06 DODE-00 CA-01 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAF-00 SS-15 NSCF-00 SSO-00 ICAF-00

INRE-00 H-02 L-03 PA-02 TRST-00 MCT-02 SY-05

USSS-00 AID-05 /079 R

DRAFTED BY ARA:GROWN:PGA

APPROVED BY ARA:SGIBSON

C/S-0:JTHYDEN

-----032176 0104302 /14

010202Z DEC 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO IMMEDIATE

FBI WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0047

JUSTICE IMMEDIATE

INCSOUTCOM QUARRY HTS CZ IMMEDIATE

INCMAC SCOTT AFB ILL IMMEDIATE

INSPEDCOM/RCJ2 MACDILL AFB FLA IMMEDIATE

INSCINCRD FT MCPHERSON GA IMMEDIATE

INSPRND AIRBORNE CORPS FT BRAGG NC IMMEDIATE

INSCINCFUR VAHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE ATTN J-2

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, GY

SUBJECT: PRESS BRIEFING

THERE WERE NO QUESTIONS ON GUYANA AT THE DEPARTMENT'S

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NOON PRESS BRIEFING, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30.

AT THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER 30, ONLY ONE

QUESTION ON GUYANA WAS ASKED. FOLLOWING IS TEXT:

Q: DOES THE NATURE OF THAT CULT SAY ANYTHING ABOUT

AMERICA AND SECONDLY WHAT CAN THE GOVERNMENT DO TO AVOID

FUTURE JONESTOWNS?

A: WELL I OBVIOUSLY DON'T THINK THAT THE JONESTOWN CULT

WAS TYPICAL IN ANY WAY OF AMERICA. I THINK THESE WERE

PEOPLE WHO BECAME OBSESSED WITH A PARTICULAR LEADER'S

PHILOSOPHY. THEY WERE OBVIOUSLY MISLED. A TRAGEDY

RESULTED. IT DID NOT TAKE PLACE IN OUR OWN COUNTRY. IN

RETROSPECT ALL OF US CAN DEPLORE WHAT DID OCCUR. IT'S

UNCONSTITUTIONAL FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF OUR COUNTRY TO

INVESTIGATE OR TO ISSUE LAWS AGAINST ANY GROUP NO MATTER

HOW MUCH THEY MIGHT DEPART FROM NORMAL CUSTOM WHICH IS

BASED ON RELIGIOUS BELIEF. THE ONLY EXCEPTION IS WHEN

THERE IS SOME SUBSTANTIVE ALLEGATION THAT THE ACTIVITIES

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OF THOSE RELIGIOUS GROUPS DIRECTLY VIOLATE A FEDERAL LAW.
MIGHT POINT OUT THAT CONGRESSMAN RYAN AND OTHER
CONGRESSMEN DID GO TO THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SEVERAL WEEKS
OR MONTHS AGO TO GO INTO THE SO CALLED BRAINWASHING
ASPECTS OF A FEW RELIGIOUS CULTS AROUND THE COUNTRY.
MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THE SO CALLED PEOPLE'S TEMPLE
WAS NOT ONE OF THOSE THOUGHT BY THEM AT THAT TIME TO
BE INDULGING IN BRAINWASHING. IT WAS A RECENT, LATE
DEVELOPMENT THAT NO ONE SO FAR AS I KNOW WAS ABLE TO
ANTICIPATE OR TO ASSESS ADEQUATELY SO I DON'T THINK THAT
WE OUGHT TO HAVE AN OVER REACTION BECAUSE OF THE JONES-
TOWN TRAGEDY BY INJECTING THE GOVERNMENT INTO TRYING TO

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CONTROL PEOPLES' RELIGIOUS BELIEFS; AND I BELIEVE THAT
WE ALSO DON'T NEED TO DEPLORE ON A NATIONWIDE BASIS THE
FACT THAT THE JONESTOWN CULT, SO CALLED, WAS TYPICAL OF
AMERICA, BECAUSE IT IS NOT. END TEXT VANCE

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